



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Superior National Forest  
Kawishiwi Ranger District

1393 Highway 169  
Ely, MN 55731  
Phone: (218) 365-7600  
Fax: (218) 365-7605

---

File Code: 2350

Date: March 18, 2013

Dear Interested Public:

The Kawishiwi Ranger District of the Superior National Forest is proposing to allow mixed use of passenger vehicles and ATVs on 5.25 miles of existing forest roads to enhance long-distance recreational vehicle riding opportunities in an area where few exist. This letter provides summary information on the proposed project and an invitation to submit comments. Also included with this letter is a proximity map of the project's location.

**Summary and Proposed Action:**

The FR 459/457 Mixed Use Project proposes to allow ATVs on Forest road's 459 and 457. Both are higher maintenance level roads currently open to passenger vehicles only. There are four dead-end roads that begin on Forest Road 459 ranging from one-quarter mile to one mile in length where ATVs are allowed. This proposal seeks to connect these routes by allowing mixed use on existing roads for a more continuous riding opportunity.

The project location includes 4 miles of FR 459, known as the Grassy Lake Road, located in T64N, R12W, sections 30, 20, 21 and 22, and 1.25 miles of FR 457 located in T64N, R12W, sections 23 and 14. Forest Road 459 is a maintenance level 4 road and FR 457 is a maintenance level 3. The Forest Plan states under G-RMV-1, p. 2-44, "OHV use is generally prohibited on maintenance level 3, 4 and 5 roads. OHV use may be allowed on specific segments of maintenance level 3, 4 and 5 roads to provide connections to other roads and trails open to OHVs, if safety, resource and other requirements can be addressed." A mixed use analysis, which measures important safety factors when considering mixed use, was completed on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011. The mixed use analysis indicated that ATVs may safely share these roads with passenger vehicles if mitigations such as brushing of some corners and improved safety signing were put in place.

I am requesting your comments to assist me in determining how much additional analysis is needed before I decide how to proceed with this project. If you have specific concerns or questions on this proposal that you'd like addressed before I make a decision, your comments will be most useful if received during this 30-day scoping comment period ending March 18, 2013.

The next step for this project will be to complete an environmental assessment to inform the public and decision maker of the potential environmental effects of the project, and to address




any issues identified from your comments. We anticipate that many of the potential effects from this type of project were considered in the Forest-wide Travel Management Project Environmental Assessment we completed in 2009. Comments on mixed use of ATVs and passenger vehicles on FR 459 and 457 will be most useful if they are specific to this project's location (see attached map).

Therefore, it is important that issues and concerns be raised by March 18, 2013. Please send comments to Brian (Mark) Pentecost, Kawishiwi Ranger District, Attn: "459\_457 Forest Roads."

- Written comments may be mailed to 1393 Hwy 169, Ely, MN 55731
- Oral comments must be provided during normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm), or via phone to either John Pierce (218) 365-7606, or Carl Skustad at (218) 365-7615
- Faxed comments may be sent to (218) 365-7605
- E-mail comments should include an identifiable name and be sent to: [comments-eastern-superior-kawishiwi@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-eastern-superior-kawishiwi@fs.fed.us) Acceptable formats for electronic comments are text (.txt) or html e-mail, Adobe PDF, and formats viewable in Microsoft Office applications. When you submit your comments to this e-mail address, you should receive an automated electronic acknowledgement as confirmation of receipt. If you do not receive acknowledgement, it is your responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means.

Public comment and requests to keep informed throughout the planning process are welcome. If we do not hear from you, your name will be removed from this project mailing list. We will inform people who comment when the environmental assessment is available on our website. If you want a paper copy of the environmental assessment, let us know. I look forward to your comments and appreciate public involvement in national forest management. If you have any questions about this project, please contact John Pierce at (218) 365-7606, e-mail at [jpierce@fs.fed.us](mailto:jpierce@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,

  
BRIAN M. PENTECOST  
District Ranger

cc: Carl Skustad